

REMARKS

Receipt is acknowledged of the Office Action of September 30, 2004. Claims 1-21, 23-25 are currently pending in the application. Claim 22 has been cancelled and Claims 1 and 17 have been amended by the present Amendment. Claims 1-25 have been rejected in the Office Action. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and request reconsideration of the rejection, as explained in more detail below.

Claims 1-4, 9, 10, 15, 17, 19 and 21 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,530,143 ("Jennings et al."). According to the Examiner, Jennings et al. discloses "a gap setting apparatus incorporates an air gage to measure the pressure drop (and indirectly the flow rate) of air through a gap of a hydrodynamic bearing, while facing sections of the bearing are moved closer together. The measured pressure drop can be correlated to the actual bearing gap and monitored to determine when the proper gap has been achieved. More particularly, the inner and outer elements of the bearing are clamped in separate carriers and are held in place. The carriers are then moved toward one another so that the inner or shaft portion of the bearing slides into the outer or sleeve portion of the bearing. To accurately set the gap between the two, an air hose with an air gage attached to it is attached to one end of the bearing gap; air is pumped through the bearing gap, exiting through the opposite end of the gap, by testing a set of reference motor parts, a high end and a low end of an acceptable bearing gap range can be established, and the corresponding air gage readings obtained. Thus, once the air gage has been calibrated against a minimum and maximum gap, each motor can be assembled with the proper gap by simply adjusting the relative position of the parts until a target air gage reading or a reading between the high and low end of

an acceptable range is obtained." Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and directs his attention to the amended Claims 1 and 17 of the present Application.

Amended Claim 17 recites a device for verifying a bearing gap between a shaft and a shaft seat of a test hydrodynamic bearing. The device includes an admission device to introduce measuring fluid into the bearing gap of the test bearing and a measuring device to measure at least one parameter characterizing the fluid through-flow through the bearing gap. The admission device further includes a feeding device through which the measuring fluid is introduced into the bearing gap at one end thereof. The feeding device includes a hood for the attachment of the feeding device to one end of the test bearing. The feeding device seals the bearing gap. Additionally, a seal is positioned between an end face of the hood and the shaft seat.

Amended Claim 1 recites a method of verifying a bearing gap between a shaft and a shaft seat of a hydrodynamic bearing. The method is accomplished by positioning the shaft into its functional position within the shaft seat of a test bearing, causing a measuring fluid to flow through the bearing gap, and measuring one or more parameters characterizing the through-flow of the fluid through the bearing gap. Specifically, the measuring fluid is caused to flow through the bearing gap by first attaching a hood of a feeding device to one end of the test bearing and then introducing the measuring fluid into the bearing gap through a feeding device such that said feeding device seals the bearing gap and a seal is positioned between an end face of the hood and the shaft seat.

As can be seen from Fig. 2 and the disclosure of the Jennings et al Patent, Air is injected into the bearing by the hose using a needle 306 which is inserted into the reservoir 120. Jennings does not teach causing the measuring fluid to flow by first attaching a hood of a feeding

device to one end of the test bearing and then introducing the measuring fluid into the bearing gap through a feeding device such that said feeding device seals the bearing gap and a seal is positioned between an end face of the hood and the shaft seat. Moreover, the device disclosed in Jennings does not include a feeding device having a hood which is configured to attach to one end of the test bearing such that the feeding device seals the bearing gap and a seal is positioned between an end face of the hood and the shaft seat.

Based on the above, Applicant believes that the above discussed limitations of Claims 1 and 17 are not taught, disclosed or even suggested in the prior art of record. Therefore, Claims 1 and 17 are believed to define patentable subject matter over the cited prior art.

Claims 5-8, 11-14, 16, 18, 20 and 22-25, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the same Jennings et al. reference. Applicant respectfully submits that dependent Claims 2-16, 18-21 and 23-25 are believed to define patentable subject matter in view of their dependency upon allowable Claims 1 and 17 and, further, on their own merits.

The Examiner is urged to telephone Applicant's undersigned counsel at the number noted below if it will advance the prosecution of this application, or with any suggestion to resolve any condition that would impede allowance. In the event that any extension of time is required, Applicant petitions for that extension of time required to make this response timely.

Kindly charge any additional fee, or credit any surplus, to Deposit Account No. 50-0675, Order No. 057517-53.

Respectfully submitted,

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Anna Vishev
Anna Vishev
Reg. No. 45,018
Schulte Roth & Zabel, LLP
919 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Tel.: (212) 756-2000